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PSC 524.01: Seminar in Organizational Behavior

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P Sc 524 (3 cr)
Seminar in Organizational Behavior
Spring 1999

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Office: LA 416 x5294
Hrs: W 11-12, 2-4; F 11-12;
and by appointment

Course Description

The course is designed to familiarize students with behavioral skills that research has shown to be important contributors to managerial effectiveness. Students will assess their current strengths and weaknesses in each behavioral area, increase their cognitive understanding of these personal and organizational skills, and begin the process of expanding and enhancing their competency by applying the behavioral principles they learn to a variety of case studies and exercises.

Course Objectives

The course is organized around an integrated, comprehensive learning model designed to change learners' individual and organizational behavior through skill assessment, learning, analysis, and practice. Specifically, we will focus on developing self-awareness, making oral and written presentations, managing stress, conducting meetings, communicating supportively, gaining power and influence, motivating, managing conflict, empowering and delegating, and conducting interviews.

Course Conduct

The approach to this seminar can be described as application-oriented education. The experiential aspects of the course are to be used for practice, not discovery. The professor's role is to facilitate student involvement by creating a learning process and an environment in which participants are motivated to find answers to their questions and to expand and sharpen their behavioral skills.

Required Text

David A. Whetten and Kim S. Cameron, *Developing Management Skills*, 4th edition (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1998).

Course Requirements and Assessment

Class participation: role plays, seminar discussions, involvement in exercises, contributions to case analyses, completion of assigned pre-class activities, contributions to group, support for classmates' learning experience. 33%

Individual written and oral assignments and exercises (marked with an *; plus one skill-application plan and evaluation chosen from those marked with a +). 33%

Group Projects: *work-performance-assessment survey; organizational problem; ** student-life presentation* (see supplemental sheet). 33%

Course Outline and Weekly Assignments

25 Jan **Introduction**

1 Feb **Introduction (continued)**

Assignment:

Step #1. Read pp. xvii-18.

Step # 2. Complete and score step 1 of the *personal assessment of management skills* survey.

Step # 3. Complete and score step 2 of the *PAMS* survey.

8 Feb **Developing Self-Awareness**

Assignment:

(a) Complete *what does it take to be an effective manager* exercise

(b) Complete *SSS Software* exercise

(c) Complete and score step 1 of *self-awareness diagnostic survey*

(d) Complete and score *defining-issues test*

(e) Complete and score *locus-of-control scale*

15 Feb Presidents' Day – no class

22 Feb **Developing Self-awareness (continued)**

Assignment:

Step #1. (a) Complete and score *tolerance-of-ambiguity scale*

(b) Complete and score *fundamental interpersonal relations orientation-behavior scale*

Step #2. Read pp. 49-75.

Step #3. *Complete *family lineage and autobiography*

Step #4. *Write a 2-page paper (double-spaced) describing and analyzing what you have learned about yourself in each of the four areas of awareness. In the process, demonstrate that you understand the various strategies, styles, etc. **Due: 1 March**

1 March **Making Oral and Written Presentations**

Assignment:

Step # 1. Read pp. 472-489, 491-497

Step # 2. *Prepare and deliver *speaking as a leader* exercise

8 March **Conducting Meetings**

Assignment:

- (a) Deliver prepared 15-minute group oral presentations on *quality circles at Battle Creek Foods*.
- (b) Read pp. 522-528
- (c) In-class group preparatory work

15 March Spring Break

22 March **Managing Stress**

Assignment:

- Step #1. (a) Complete and score step 1 of *stress-mgt* diagnostic survey
- (b) Complete and score *time-mgt* survey
- (c) Complete and score *type-A-personality inventory*
- (d) Complete and score *social-readjustment-rating scale*
- (e) Answer *three sources of personal stress questions*
- Step #2. Read pp. 88-127.
- Step #3. (a) Complete *small-wins-strategy exercise*
- (b) Complete *life-balance analysis* (recommended)
- (c) Complete *deep-relaxation exercise* (recommended)
- (d) *Complete *monitoring and managing time exercise* (as amended) **Due: 5 April**
- (e) Complete assignments 5 & 6 on pages 133-134 (recommended)
- (f) Complete assignment 7 on page 134. **Due: 5 April**
- (g) *Complete **one** of these: assignment 1,2,3, or 4 on page 133. **Due: 5 April**

29 March **Communicating Supportively**

Assignment:

- Step #1. (a) Complete and score step 1 of *supportive-communication* diagnostic survey
- (b) Complete and score *communication-styles* survey
- Step #2. Read pp. 194-220
- Step #3. (a) Complete one of these (recommended): assignment 1 or 2 on page 223, or *initiate a PMI system at your workplace and report on the results*
- (b) +Complete *application plan and evaluation*. **Due: 3 May latest**

5 April **Gaining Power and Influence**

Assignment:

- Step #1. (a) Complete and score step 1 of *gaining power & influence* diagnostic survey
- (b) Complete and score *using-influence-strategies* survey
- Step #2. Read pp. 229-268

- Step # 3. (a) Complete assignment 1,2,3, or 5 on page 271 (recommended)
(b) +Complete *application plan and evaluation* Due: 3 May latest
****Group organizational-problem-project outline due**

12 April **Motivating Others**

Assignment:

- Step #1. (a) Complete and score step 1 of *diagnosing poor performance and enhancing motivation* survey
(b) Complete and score *work-performance-assessment* survey
Step # 2. Read pp. 278-311
Step #3. (a) Complete assignment 1 or 2 on page 314 (recommended)
(b) Prepare *salary increases at Ord Services* (handout)
(c) +Complete *application plan and evaluation* Due: 3 May latest
****Group work-performance-assessment survey due**

19 April **Managing Conflict**

Assignment:

- Step # 1. (a) Complete and score step 1 of *managing-conflict* diagnostic survey
(b) Complete and score *strategies-for-handling-conflict* survey
Step # 2. Read pp. 320-355
Step # 3. (a) *Complete one: assignment 1,2,3, or 4 on pages 367-368. Due: 26 April
(b) +Complete *application plan and evaluation* Due: 3 May latest

26 April **Empowering and Delegating**

Assignment:

- Step #1. (a) Complete and score *empowerment and delegation* diagnostic survey
(b) Complete and score *personal-empowerment* assessment
Step #2. Read pp. 377-413
Step #3. (a) Complete assignment 2 or 3 on page 415 (recommended)
(b) +Complete *application plan and evaluation* Due: 10 May latest

3 May **Interviewing**

Assignment:

- Read pp. 500-513, 518-519.
****Group organizational fact sheet due**

10 May ****Group Presentations**

Supplement: Course Requirements and Assessment

Individual written and oral assignments and exercises: will be graded according to (1) the thoughtfulness with which students assess their own strengths and weaknesses and analyze what they are learning about themselves; (2) the seriousness and thoroughness of analysis reflected in their written (or oral) performance; and (3) the extent to which their written (or oral) performance demonstrates superior understanding and application of the concepts introduced in this course; (4) professional preparation of final submission.

Group Projects:

(1) Prepare option 2; pp. 310-312 of text. **Due 12 April**

(2) Each project group will make an in-class presentation of about 30 minutes on a real or fictitious *organizational problem* related to a topic in one of the chapters read this term. The group should assume the role of a consulting firm called in to solve a specific problem in a public, private, or not-for-profit organization. To arrive at a realistic problem, each group member should interview one manager regarding organizational problems and solutions. The group also should refer to current management practices reported in professional journals, and make reference to what The University of Montana is doing to address this kind of problem. The group's project must be approved by the professor before being started.

On **3 May**, the group must hand out to the class copies of a *fact sheet* describing their organization and problem. On **10 May**, each group also should submit to the professor a *final group-project report* that includes a detailed outline of the oral presentation, a description of specific tasks performed by each group member, sources of information used (persons interviewed and bibliography), and a professionally prepared one-page summary of what the group learned from the project.

The **10 May** class presentation should concentrate on (1) problem description, (2) the group's proposed remedy (including a convincing justification based on successes in other organizations and the application of skills learned in this seminar), and (3) an implementation plan. The presentation will be followed by 15 minutes of questions from the class playing the role of an Executive Management Committee representing the "problem organization." The presentation will be graded using the criteria found on the *group project evaluation and feedback form*. This should be a high-quality professional presentation.

(3) On **10 May**, each project group also will make a 7-10 minute informal presentation on a *problem from student life* related to the group's selected skill topic – to be cleared with the professor by **5 April**. This assignment is meant to highlight the relevance of management skills for solving everyday problems. The presentation will be evaluated on: (1) is the problem believable, interesting, and challenging? (2) is the problem description adequate? (3) does the problem illustrate a key concept covered in this course? (4) are the management skills that the group elected to apply to the problem realistic, relevant, and useful in solving everyday problems?